

REMARKS

Applicant has cancelled independent claim 6 and inserted the limitations presented by way of cancelled claim 6 in dependant claim 7 so as to present claim 7 in independent form.

Claim 7 stands rejected under a combination of five prior art references, the fifth of which, Peart et al (Reference D), allegedly shows slitting a fabric following a dieing process.

Applicant does not claim the mere slitting of a fabric such as alluded to in this Peart reference, but rather Applicant claims slitting of a strip of material that has been preprinted with images by a digital transfer printing process designed to present identical images on each of the portions of the strip that are ultimately slit into individual tapes.

The printing process called for in applicant's claims is similar to that in Reference B (U.S. Patent No.: 4,326,003) but that reference fails to show or suggest a way of presenting images or drawings side-by-side on a single belt. Digital transfer printing, on textured material of this type, with the further feature of splitting the strap into individual belts or tapes is not shown or suggested in the prior art generally or the cited references in particular.

Finally, the amended claims call for identifying digital images on the paper itself so that optical sensors connected to a computer system synchronize movement of both the paper web and the underlying textured straps for indexing movement between the calendar/heated rolls.

Reference B, (U.S. Patent No.: 4,326,003) merely teaches that a layered substrate 9 have outer surfaces that are moved together with paper tapes for printing from these preprinted tapes. Claim 8 not only calls for the second paper web to be provided with digital images, but identification markers so the same strap as is simultaneously treated from the first and second mentioned paper webs. The symmetrically applied images on both sides of a single strap are transferred between the same calendering rolls. The need for two straps bonded to one another as suggested in the prior art '003 Patent reference does not suggest the method of claims 7-10.

Serial No.: 10/582,290

Office Action dated: October 19, 2009

Response to Office Action dated: January 19, 2010

The goal of the present invention is to provide symmetrically arranged images on side by side tapes or belts cut from a continuously fed single strap that is mated with one or more paper webs in a unique digital printing, that uses known image transfer techniques. Adapting that known image transfer technique to the process of the present invention was not obvious when the present invention was made. Therefore, reconsideration of this application in light of the amended claims and in view of these remarks is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions on either the claims as presented or with respect to the differences alluded to in these remarks, applicant's attorney can be contacted at the telephone number listed below in order to provide any supplemental explanation or additional amendments to the claims deemed necessary.

Applicant believes no fee is due for filing this response, however, if it is determined that a fee is due, please charge deposit account No. 13-0235.

Respectfully submitted,

By /John C. Hilton/
John C. Hilton
Registration No. 22,965
Attorney for Applicant

McCormick, Paulding & Huber LLP
CityPlace II, 185 Asylum Street
Hartford, CT 06103-3402
(860) 549-5290